

AMENDMENTS

In the claims:

Please amend claims 5, 7, 8, 11, and 42. A clean copy of the amended claims is provided below:

5. (amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said steps a) and b) result in formation of a channel within the nucleus pulposus, the channel having a channel wall, and the method further comprises:

d) positioning the at least one active electrode adjacent to the channel wall; and

e) coagulating tissue of the nucleus pulposus by applying a second high frequency voltage between the at least one active electrode and the at least one return electrode.

7. (amended) The method of claim 5, wherein the first high frequency voltage is in the range of from about 150 to about 700 volts rms, and the second high frequency voltage is in the range of from about 20 to about 150 volts rms.

8. (amended) The method of claim 5, wherein the first high frequency voltage is in the range of from about 150 to about 350 volts rms, and the second high frequency voltage is in the range of from about 20 to about 90 volts rms.

11. (amended) The method of claim 10, wherein said step f) comprises applying the electrically conductive fluid to the at least one active electrode, or applying the electrically conductive fluid to the disc.

42. (amended) The method of claim 33, wherein the shaft includes a shield, the shaft distal end portion includes a first curve, a second curve proximal